

**IN THE CLAIMS**

All claims from the parent application have been deleted, and this continuation application filed herewith has added the following claims beginning on page 86, line 2 through page 96, line 14.

1. A vertebral stabilization assembly for stabilizing vertebrae, the assembly comprising:

- a first vertebral screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the first vertebral screw with a vertebral body of a first vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a first connecting screw having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the first vertebral screw;
- a second vertebral screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the second vertebral screw with a vertebral body of a second vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a second connecting screw having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the second vertebral screw; and
- a connecting member having a first end, a second end, a first location and a second location, wherein the connecting member is operable to couple with the first connecting screw positionable in the first vertebra at the first location of the connecting member, and the

connecting member is operable to couple with the second connecting screw positionable in the second vertebra at the second location of the connecting member for stabilization of the first vertebra and the second vertebra.

2. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 1, wherein the first vertebral screw is operable to be positioned in the first vertebra from an anterior side of the first vertebra into the vertebral body of the first vertebra, and the second vertebral screw is operable to be positioned in the second vertebra from an anterior side of the second vertebra into the vertebral body of the second vertebra.

3. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 2, wherein the first vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the first vertebra and into a pedicle portion of the first vertebra, and the second vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the second vertebra and into a pedicle portion of the second vertebra.

4. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 2, wherein the first vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the first vertebra but not into a pedicle portion of the first vertebra, and the second vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the second vertebra but not into a pedicle portion of the second vertebra.

5. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 1, wherein the first vertebral screw is a first anterior vertebral screw, and the second vertebral screw is a second anterior vertebral screw.

6. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 1, wherein the first vertebral screw is a first pedicle screw, and the second vertebral screw is a second pedicle screw.

7. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 1, wherein the connecting member is coupled to the first connecting screw adjacent the second end of the first connecting screw, wherein the connecting member is coupled to the second connecting screw adjacent the second end of the second connecting screw.

8. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 7, wherein the first location of the connecting member is at the first end of the connecting member, wherein the second location of the connecting member is at the second end of the connecting member.

9. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 1, wherein the connecting member is coupled to the first connecting screw at the second end of the first connecting screw, wherein the connecting member is coupled to the second connecting screw at the second end of the second connecting screw.

10. A method for stabilizing a lower vertebra and an upper vertebra from an anterior side of the vertebrae using a vertebral stabilization assembly, the method comprising:

inserting a first vertebral screw, which includes a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable to threadingly engage the lower vertebra, into the lower vertebra from an anterior side of the lower vertebra such that a portion of the threaded portion of the shaft engages a vertebral body portion of the lower vertebra, the shaft of the first vertebral screw having an engaging portion operable to receive a first connecting screw, and the shaft of the first vertebral screw having a coupling portion operable to couple with a guide member;

inserting a second vertebral screw, which includes a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable to threadingly engage the upper vertebra, into the upper vertebra from an anterior side of the upper vertebra such that a portion of the threaded portion of the shaft engages a vertebral body portion of the upper vertebra, the shaft of the second vertebral screw having an engaging portion operable to receive a second connecting screw, and the shaft of the second vertebral screw having a coupling portion operable to couple with the guide member;

locating the coupling portion of the shaft of the first vertebral screw from an anterior side of the lower vertebra;

coupling the guide member to the coupling portion of the shaft of the first vertebral screw from the anterior side of the lower vertebra;

inserting a lower connecting screw, which includes a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the first vertebral screw and a second end, the lower connecting screw inserted through the anterior side of the lower vertebra using the guide member;

locating the coupling portion of the shaft of the second vertebral screw from an anterior side of the upper vertebra;

coupling the guide member to the coupling portion of the shaft of the second vertebral screw from the anterior side of the upper vertebra;

inserting an upper connecting screw, which includes a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the second vertebral screw and a second end, the upper connecting screw inserted through the anterior side of the upper vertebra using the guide member; and

connecting the second end of the lower connecting screw of the lower vertebra to the second end of the upper connecting screw of the upper vertebra with a connecting member.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the first vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the lower vertebra and into a pedicle portion of the lower vertebra, and the second vertebral screw is operable to be

positioned through the vertebral body of the upper vertebra and into a pedicle portion of the upper vertebra.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the first vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the lower vertebra but not into a pedicle portion of the lower vertebra, and the second vertebral screw is operable to be positioned through the vertebral body of the upper vertebra but not into a pedicle portion of the upper vertebra.

13. A vertebral stabilization assembly for stabilizing vertebrae comprising:

- a first pedicle screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the first pedicle screw with a first vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a first connecting screw having a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the first pedicle screw within the first vertebra;
- a second pedicle screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the pedicle screw with a second vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a second connecting screw having a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the second pedicle screw within the second vertebra; and
- a connecting member having a first end and a second end, the first end of the connecting member connected to the first connecting screw positionable in the first

vertebra, the second end of the connecting member connected to the second connecting screw positionable in the second vertebra for stabilization of the first vertebra and the second vertebra.

14. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 13, wherein the connecting member is defined as a rod.

15. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 13, wherein the first and second connecting screws are provided with coupling portions operable to couple the first and second connecting screws with the connecting member.

16. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 15, wherein the coupling portions of the first and second connecting screws are further defined as a threaded end of the first and second connecting screws.

17. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 13, wherein the connecting member connected to the first and second connecting screw is sized to retain the first vertebra disposed a distance from the second vertebra.

18. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 13, wherein the connecting member is sized to retain the first vertebra disposed so as to prevent contact with the second vertebra.

19. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 13, wherein the connecting member is defined as a bracket.

20. The vertebral stabilization assembly of Claim 13, wherein the connecting member is defined as a plate.

21. A vertebral stabilization assembly for stabilizing vertebrae and an item to assist with installation of the assembly, the combination comprising:

- a first pedicle screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the first pedicle screw with a first vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a first connecting screw having a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the first pedicle screw within the first vertebra;
- a second pedicle screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the pedicle screw with a second vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a second connecting screw having a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the second pedicle screw within the second vertebra;
- a connecting member having a first end and a second end, the first end of the connecting member connected to the first connecting screw positionable in the first vertebra, the second end of the connecting member connected to the second connecting screw positionable in the second vertebra for stabilization of the first vertebra and the second vertebra; and
- a bore screw having a shaft and a threaded portion, the bore screw operable to bore an opening in the vertebra for placement of the first and second pedicle screws.



22. A vertebral stabilization assembly for stabilizing vertebrae and an item to assist with installation of the assembly, the combination comprising:

- a first pedicle screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the first pedicle screw with a first vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a first connecting screw having a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the first pedicle screw within the first vertebra;
- a second pedicle screw having a shaft provided with a threaded portion operable for threading engagement of the pedicle screw with a second vertebra, the shaft having an engaging portion;
- a second connecting screw having a first end adapted to be received by the engaging portion of the second pedicle screw within the second vertebra;
- a connecting member having a first end and a second end, the first end of the connecting member connected to the first connecting screw positionable in the first vertebra, the second end of the connecting member connected to the second connecting screw positionable in the second vertebra for stabilization of the first vertebra and the second vertebra; and
- a tool operable to engage at least the first connecting screw for connection of at least the first connecting screw to the first pedicle screw.

23. The combination of Claim 22, further including a tool operable to engage at least the first connecting screw for removal of at least the first connecting screw from the first pedicle screw.

24. The combination of Claim 22, further including a tool operable to engage at least the first pedicle screw for threading engagement of at least the first pedicle screw in the first vertebra.

25. The combination of Claim 22, further including a tool operable to engage at least the first pedicle screw for stabilization of at least the first pedicle screw while removing the connecting screw.

26. The combination of Claim 22, wherein the first pedicle screw and the second pedicle screw have a coupling portion operable to couple with a guide member, and further including a guide member operable to couple with the coupling portion of the first pedicle screw and the second pedicle screw.